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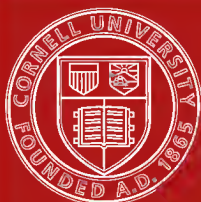
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OUTLINES OF LECTURES
ON
GENERAL LITERATURE.

PART II.
EPIC POETRY.

Jauncey
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ITHACA, N. Y.
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GENERAL LITERATURE.

PART II.

EPIC POETRY AND EARLY LITERARY FORMS.

LECTURE I.

THE MYTH IN LITERATURE.

1. The mythical era essentially different from the periods when myths are freely handled by lyric and dramatic poets [Blakesley's "Herodotus," Vol. I, p. xxx; "Hist. Value of the Greek Mythical Legend" in Mure's "Crit. Hist. of Anc. Lit.," Vol. I, Book I, ch. 2].

2. Myths arise in primitive ages from an intuitional or poetic view of nature. They are an unconscious product, like language.

3. Each different name applied to the same object, viewed under different relations, becomes a separate personality, and each has its story.

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4. But this does not fully explain the Greek myths, or the state of feeling and manner of viewing nature as alive, that characterizes a myth-producing era.

5. The nucleus of the great epic poems and traditional myths to be found in the Hindoo mythology.

6. The different view now taken of mythological stories, from that of cultivated Greeks and Romans.¹

7. The impious and impure stories not originally intended to convey any such literal meaning, as applied to them in a period that has outgrown the spontaneous, childlike perception of natural phenomena.

8. The creation of symbolic language from man's ideal and spiritual nature.

9. The first step is to connect what is the providence of daily life with the most striking phenomena of the heavens.

10. Almost impossible to determine what is literal and what symbolical ["Zoölogical Mythology," by Gubernatis, Vol. I, p. 9].

11. The germ of folk-lore, fairy stories, and traditional legends.

12. Mythology is the earliest form of poetry. It is nature regarded and spoken of as alive in every motion, change, and appearance.

13. A modern, and a mythical, description of the same natural scene [Longfellow's "Hiawatha" IV, p. 61].

14. Mythology is the spontaneous expression of an age of childhood. Every thing is endowed with life.

15. The survival in festivals and popular customs

[Gubernatis, Vol. I, p. 51; "L'Inde Française," par E. Burnouf].

16. The same primitive method of expression in other than the Aryan races. A Mongol story ["Dub. Univ. Mag.," Vol. LXXIII, p. 595; "Zoölogical Mythology," by Gubernatis, Vol. I, p. 150].

17. Similar phenomena produce cognate images and expressions; literary or oral communication not necessary.

18. Every race passes through the same essential phases of development.

19. The indigenous nature of many apparently local and special expressions and turns of thought ["The Knights" of Aristophanes, v. 550].

20. The natural language in all ages. Carlyle's description of Oliver Cromwell's death. "So stirbt ein held" ["Amazonian Tortoise Myths," by Professor Hartt, p. 17].

21. The natural and the learned symbolism. Illustrations from Pindar and Herodotus [Herod., B. IV, 131, 132; "New Eng. Memorials," by Nathaniel Morton, Boston, 1826].

22. A symbolic expression can easily be expanded into a myth. Newton and St. Augustine.

23. The essential truth in every genuine myth and popular fable.

* "The Greek mythology contains a treasure of practical wisdom which can be not only profitable to us, but which is very needful at

the present time. It teaches us to consider nature and the facts of life ideally."—"Griechische Mythologie," von D. Emil Braun, ch. 111.

But Cicero, in his perplexity at explaining the current stories of the gods, exclaims: "From things natural, which were advantageously discovered, have arisen fictions and imaginary deities that have been the foundations of false opinions, pernicious errors, and wretched superstitions. For every thing belonging to the gods is reduced to the level of human weakness: they are represented with our passions, with lust, sorrow, and anger; and according to the fable, they have had wars and combats, not only as Homer relates, when they have interested themselves in two different armies, but when they have fought battles in their own defense against the Titans and giants. These stories, of the greatest weakness and levity, are related and believed with the most implicit folly."

In his Encomium of Busiris, Isocrates says: "The poets heap upon the gods charges which are brought only against the greatest criminals. They load these celestial beings with the crimes of theft, assassination, adultery, and incest. They make children devour their parents, and parents murder their children. They picture the gods as chained and tortured; driven out of heaven, and wandering wretchedly on earth. Let us regard it as no less a crime to believe these monstrous fictions, than to relate them."

LECTURE II.

THE LEGEND AND FABLE.

1. Müller's definition of mythology, as "a disease of language" ["Science of Language," 1st series, p. 21; 2d series, p. 432].

2. This theory only explains some of the mythological

names. In mythology, especially the Greek, are to be found the primitive history, poetry, religion, and philosophy, in accordance with the national spirit ["The Greek Poets," by J. A. Symonds, 2d series, pp. 1-39].

3. The myth and the legend. Illustrated by the mediæval legends, told in good faith, and the production of an age of implicit belief.

4. The spiritual contents of legendary stories. Visions and imaginative examples are related as facts, as what has been seen and heard.

5. The real meaning is lost, and with a different state of perception comes a bald, literal interpretation.

6. Examples of this literalizing and sensualizing tendency, and of primitive symbolic utterances misunderstood as facts, to be found in history, religion and science. Many traditional sayings, events, proverbs, and popular superstitions to be explained in this way, "Democritus putting out his eyes"; "the amethyst"; "the lion fleeing at the crowing of the cock"; "the ram lying six months on one side"; "St. Germain and St. Francis, church-pillars"; "the mermaid"; "imprints in the rock"; "the red and black cow"; "the Roman senate meeting in the open air"; "Pliny's monstrous ant"; etc. ["Zoölogical Mythology," Vol. I, p. 174; p. 247; Vol. II, p. 2 and 12; Pliny's "Nat. Hist.", V and XI, 31].

7. The origin of metaphor and poetic language in the transference of some quality by its concrete name to another object or person; as, a cunning man, is a fox, etc.

8. Nature, furnishing man with symbols, emblems, and

mirrors of himself, the fable and allegory spring up. Many of these are understood literally, and account for many wonderful stories of changes into flower, bird, and beast.

9. This use of the inanimate world survives in the fable, parable, and allegory.

10. The terms *ainos*, *muthos*, and *logos*, applied to fables.

11. The difference between myth and fable; the one an unconscious product, and the other a conscious invention for a moral purpose. In a myth the truth exists only in the concrete form. A fable is an expanded simile.

12. The primitive and the literary myth ["Encyclopædia Britannica," Vol. VIII, p. 837].

13. The allegorical and moral fable a subsequent growth to the pure beast-fable [Tylor's "Prim. Cult.," Vol. I, p. 411].

14. The analogy between man and nature a universal perception. Fables not confined to Aryan race [Prof. Hartt's "Amazonian Tortoise Myths," 1875].

15. The harmonious adaptation of mind and matter, man's spirit and the external world.

16. In primitive ages, the simplest objects supply the terms in which truth is embodied, man becoming wise "by deeply drinking in the soul of things."

17. The moral truths continually taught by the grander natural phenomena. Citations from Leroux and Wordsworth.

LECTURE III.

THE FABLE.

1. The objects of nature reflect the moods and states of man. They impart lessons of prudence, warning, hope, and rebuke.

2. The particular case is an embodiment of a general truth. The form of expression may be an apologue, a fable, or an allegory.¹

3. The original fable belongs to the mythologic stage of culture [Tylor's "Primitive Culture," Vol. I, p. 372; Vol. I, p. 411].

4. The fable marks the passage from barbarism to civilization, "the line where the quick observant fancy meets the reflecting intellect ["Man's Origin and Destiny," by J. P. Leslie, p. 69].

5. The fable brought truth to bear upon the private and public affairs of life. Earliest examples [Herodotus, I, 141; II, 162; Hesiod's "Works and Days," v. 201; "Book of Judges," ch. IX; Plutarch's "Coriolanus"; Shakespeare's "Coriolanus," Act I, § 1; "Lives of the Ten Orators," under *Demosthenes*].

6. The use of the fable in oratory [Quintilian's "Rhetoric," Book II, ch. XX, § 5, 6].

7. The earliest oriental fables, translated between the VIth and XIIth Centuries. The Pancha Tantra; The Hitopadesá; The Imperial Book, etc. ["Pantschatantra; fünf bücher indischer Fabeln, Märchen und Erzählun-

gen," von Theodor Benfey; "The Hitopadesá," by Max Müller; "The Anvári-Suhalí or Lights of Canopus"; being the Persian version of the "Fables of Pilpay; or the Book Kalilah and Damnah," by Ed. B. Eastwick].

8. Analysis of the Hitopadesa.

9. The vast number of fables of this sort in India and China at a remote date ["Contes et Apologues Indiens," Tomes I et II, Traduction de M. Stanislaus Julien, 2 vols., 1860].

10. Similar stories among the Mongols ["Blackwood's Mag.," Vol. LXXIII, p. 596].

11. The fable among the Greeks ["The Phædo" of Plato].

12. The different names according to its character and supposed origin—Lybian, Cilician, Sybaritic, Cyprian, Lydian, Carian, and Egyptian.

13. The inadequate and inept moral tacked to many of the fables.

14. The life-wisdom of the Greek, and the soul-wisdom of the Hindoo fables.

15. The apothegms and wise sayings traced back to Homer [Plutarch's "Banquet of the Seven Wise Men"].

16. The nature and position of the fable well illustrated by a literary myth of Apollonius of Tyana.²

¹ Says a French critic: "The apologue is the oldest kind of fiction employed by philosophers; and while it is the simplest it is not the least expressive. It must have been very natural and attractive to be found among all peoples attaining a certain degree of civilization; the Hindoos have their Bidpay, the Arabians their Lokman, the Greeks their Æsop."

"Histoire du Roman," par A. Chassang, p. 16.

See also E. Dumeril: "Histoire de la fable ésoquique."

"Dublin University Magazine," 78, 601; "Fables of Bidpai."

Loiseleur de Longchamps: "Essai sur les fables indiennes, 1838."

² "Æsop was a shepherd, and pastured his flock in the neighborhood of a temple consecrated to Mercury. A lover of wisdom, he besought the gods continually that it might be given him. Many worshipers came to the temple, making the same prayer, and bringing costly presents of ivory, silver and gold. Æsop was too poor to make such beautiful gifts, and he could only bring a little milk and honey, to which he added some sprigs of myrtle, some roses and violets, which were not even tied together in a bouquet. 'Would it be right,' said he to Mercury, 'to neglect my flock and busy myself in weaving garlands?' At last came the day when Mercury was to bestow the gift of wisdom upon his devotees, and he distributed them according to the value of the offerings. 'You,' he said to him who had made the richest gifts, 'be a philosopher.' To him who had made the next richest, 'shine an orator'; and so on to the sixth, until he had exhausted his store. Æsop came near being forgotten; but the god recollected him, and also called to mind a fable which he had learned from the Hours, who brought him up, and watched his cradle on Olympus. 'Hold!' he then said to him; 'a fable is the first lesson that I received, and as a reward for your gifts, I bestow upon you the ability to compose fables.' And this was the last gift that Wisdom had to bestow."

LECTURE IV.

THE LITERATURE OF THE FABLE.

1. Æsop a generic name for all the floating jests and piquant hints in the form of fable. The popular account

that he was a slave in the VIth Century, B.C. [Müller's "Lit. of Anc. Greece," Vol. I, p. 190].

2. The fables of Babrias discovered at Mt. Athos ["Fras. Mag.", 41: 529; "Edin. Rev.", 113: 524; "Rev. des Deux Mondes," April 15, 1840].

3. The fable, the only kind of Greek literature not imitated in Latin until Phædrus. His fables brought to light in 1562 ["Fras. Mag.", 17: 188, 147; Nisard's "Etudes sur les poètes latins," Vol. I, pp. 1-53].

4. The fable originally in prose, and receives a different character when turned into verse and using epithets, ornaments, and imaginative incidents. It is thus, epic, lyric, and dramatic.

5. Phædrus fails to seize the true moral, and his application often artificial and far-fetched.

6. Many of the fables of the Middle Ages, the old fabliaux, and the household stories of Grimm, may be traced back to their oriental parentage.

7. This species of literature reached its fullest growth in "Reynard the Fox," a Frankish composition of the XIIth Century [Tylor's "Prim. Culture," Vol. I, p. 373; Schlegel's "Hist. of Lit.," p. 192; Froude's "Short Studies," 1st series].

8. The poem, "Reineke Fuchs," by Goethe, is based upon the legend as it existed in the XIIIth Century and contains French, Flemish, and German elements.

9. The common sense of the people photographs itself in these burlesque images and satires of the vices

and follies of the time. The beginning of the revolt against the mitre and the sword.

10. Most of the current fables are of men wearing the masks of beasts.

11. In La Fontaine, born in 1621, the fable has become classic in French literature.¹

12. It is a dramatic poem having a plot, variety of characters and incidents with poetic illustration and ornament ["La Fontaine's Fables," translated by E. Wright, Jr.]

13. Lessing's criticism of La Fontaine ["Schriften," Vol. V; "Abhandlungen über die Fabel"].

14. The four friends, La Fontaine, Boileau, Racine, and Molière.

15. The popularity of La Fontaine and its causes; not invention, elevation of thought, depth of reflection, fertility of imagination, or abundance of humor; but he was true to his own individuality, simple, natural, and a lover of nature; sympathetic, genial, and human. He had the gift of imaginative sympathy, like Irving and Dickens.

16. Voltaire depreciates him, but St. Beuve calls him, "the Homer of the French" ["La Fontaine," in "Causeries du Lundi," Vol. VII, and "Portraits littéraires," Vol. I].

17. The natural, easy and perfect style of La Fontaine the result of study and elaboration. Illustration of the truth, that "the province of taste is to bring us back to

our instinct" [M. Nisard's "History of French Literature"].

18. The reputation of Boileau and La Fontaine with contemporaries and posterity.

19. La Fontaine lives because nature speaks through him. The genuine love of nature necessary to an artistic representation.²

20. The fables of Gay, in English Literature, attract neither by their thought or style; their commonplace character.

21. The use of the fable by modern authors—Shakespeare, Defoe, Emerson [King Henry V; Defoe's "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters"; Emerson's "Poems"].

22. Lessing's proposal to utilize the Æsopian fables in developing the power of invention and inductive reasoning ["Vermischte Schriften, Vol. V"].

23. The true genius shows itself in construction, and a well-constructed fable will always hold its place.

¹ For the fullest account of La Fontaine, see "La Fontaine et ses Fables," par H. Taine; "La Fontaine et les Fabulistes," 2 vols., par Saint-Marc Girardin; "Revue des Deux Mondes," 1st Dec., 1869; "Introduction to the translation," by E. Wright, Jr.; and "La Fontaine, Seine Fabeln, und ihre Gegner," von Wilhelm Kulpe, Leipzig, 1880.

² The greatest of French artists, recently deceased, J. F. Millet, recognized this, when he wrote: "To know a thing well, you must belong to it. Nature is always beautiful. On these sad winter days, when the wind moans, it is beautiful to walk in the forest under lofty trees bared of their leaves, to see those *poor beings*

twisted and tormented by the wind, left alone with the night that envelops them, and to ask yourself: 'What do they feel? What do they suffer?'

Here is the true poetic or imaginative sympathy at the basis of all art, and which is the secret of La Fontaine's enduring charm. In this spirit he has reproduced the old fables; but they are no longer the secret wisdom of the ages, they are common sense baptized in La Fontaine's imaginative sympathies.

No sharpness of wit, keenness of intellectual perception, philosophic depth, or critical acumen can ever be the substitute, in works of art, for that sympathy with, and love for, the objects that are transferred to the canvas, to the marble, or the more plastic word. The true artist becomes, for the time, that which he seeks to portray. He reproduces it in a living form, because it has been created anew in his own living perception. In La Fontaine ancient fables of all ages and countries re-appear, but many of them have lost their old physiognomy, and have laid aside whatever was local, whatever was peculiar to nation or creed, and are embodiments of human common sense.

LECTURE V.

THE EPIC IN LITERATURE.

1. The epic the natural outgrowth of the mythical and legendary period.
2. Characters and deeds idealized through the haze of reverence, imagination, and national feeling.
3. The characteristics of the epic a natural outgrowth of the influences giving it birth and form:
 - (a) An element of the marvelous and supernatural, belonging to the mythologic period.

(b) Gods regarded as actual, living beings, and events the accomplishment of a divine purpose.

(c) The popular consciousness and living traditions put into a shape to be remembered and sung;—hence unity, as these are embodied in a heroic, living form.

(d) A mythic grandeur and grotesque simplicity; these are characteristics of the age itself.

(e) A struggle for national existence and glory.

4. These epics have common features and essentially the same mythical framework ["Aryan Mythology," by G. W. Cox, Vol. I, p. 108 and 209].

5. But this mythic groundwork of phenomena in nature does not exclude the existence of historic names and events ["Geschichte der Homerischen Poesie," von J. F. Lauer, p. 163].

6. Examples showing that fables gather around modern facts that are acknowledged to be authentic ["Rev. des Deux Mondes," 1836, p. 483].

7. The removal of all historical ground as absurd as the attempt to find precise, historical data, and a personal characterization.

8. The primitive epic cannot be produced after analysis is applied to religion and life.

9. Impossible to escape the conclusion that Achilles is a solar hero, in a more significant way than Symonds allows ["The Greek Poets," 2d series, p. 43].

10. A hero clad in celestial armor, dazzling all eyes, holding conversation with prophetic steeds, cannot be

be reduced to purely human characteristics, except by attributing mere oriental exuberance and hyperbole to Homer ["Iliad," XVIII and XIX].

11. The elemental character of the warfare in the epic poets.

12. This illustrated by the hymns to Hercules, Apollo, Diana, etc.

13. The gradual development of poetry, from the simple narration of the phenomena of nature, and cries for help and benediction, to the heroic chant by the rhapsodists.

14. The epic denotes an age of self-conscious activity, freedom, and personal development.

15. It is not history, but the first form that history assumes: events and persons through the medium of idealizing tradition.

"Fras. Mag.," 1851; Froude's "Short Studies," 1st series, p. 408; "Les Chefs D'Œuvre Épiques, de Tous les Peuples," par A. Chassang et F. L. Marcou.

LECTURE VI.

THE GREEK EPIC.

1. In the centuries between the Homeric Iliad and the expedition against Troy, tradition had interwoven the names of heroes into myths and popular legends, floating among the people; and these names and deeds

were incorporated into the stories of the various tribes of the Hellenic race. These were sung by rhapsodists at feasts, public assemblies, celebrations and festivals.

2. The Homeric poems embody these popular myths and legends in a form that lives because of its unity, its naturalness, its fidelity to nature and human life.

3. These poems spring from a soil of popular life, mythical belief, and legendary faith, and are not the artificial production of poetic talent working up at the study-table material for effect.

4. Whether the work of one individual mind or of the popular consciousness, these poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, round off into a whole a vast cycle of legends and myths, constituting all that the people had of literature, history, and religious beliefs.

5. A mirror, as well as product, of the age and national life.

6. The Homeric poems, even if the work of one genius, were sung or recited in parts, for the entertainment of the people ["Homeric Dissertations," in Blackie's "*Homer and the Iliad*," Vol. I, p. 12].

7. Their attraction at the present day, and their living, poetic power.¹

8. Homer the most important poetical monument in existence [Matthew Arnold's "*Translators of Homer*"].

9. This poetry a naïve and picturesque representation [Lord Derby's Speech in 1865, quoted in Blackie's "*Homer*," Vol. I, p. 143].

10. In it every object was alive, and by imaginative

sympathy the poet enters into scenes and events. Spears, waves, mountains, horses have personality ["*Iliad*," XXIII, 216; I, 482; IV, 424; XIII, 29; XIV, 392].

11. The meeting of the different Hellenic tribes in Asia Minor gave the necessary conditions for the birth of such poems [K. O. Müller's "*Literature of Ancient Greece*," Vol. I, Book I, ch. IV].

12. The interest centres about one man and not any event or series of events. The central nucleus of the *Iliad* an Achilleis [De Quincey's "*Homer and the Homericidæ*," "*The Greek Poets*," by J. A. Symonds, p. 43, 2d series].

13. The internal unity of the poem. The Xth Book an essential part, notwithstanding the apparent want of direct connection with the narrated story.

14. Illustrations of the unity of tone, coloring, purpose and character ["*University Quart.*", 4: 209].

15. The Homeric heroes, women, warriors and gods ["*N. A. Rev.*", 91: 301; "*Fras. Mag.*", 44: 76; "*The Greek Poets*," by J. A. Symonds, 2d series, pp. 40-106].

16. The objectiveness, calmness, and natural pathos of the representation.

¹ Lord Chatham asked his son to read to him, a day or two before he died, the verses in Pope's *Homer* describing the death of Hector; and when finished, said: "Read it again."

Charles James Fox said, "Every thing is to be found in *Homer*."

Gladstone's love and admiration for *Homer* are evident, and his "*Homer and the Homeric Age*," in 3 vols., a monument of faithful study and erudition, rather than of critical insight.

Lord Derby's translation is spirited in parts, but destitute of poetic merit.

Pope's version is an ornate and ingeniously rhymed poem, entertaining in its way, but with more of Pope than of Homer in its elaborate and epigrammatic finish.

Chapman's translation is too cumbrous, quaint, and archaic for general reading, but rich in expression and happy rendering to the student.

The best translation is that by Bryant. Its diction is neither too formal nor elevated, and the rhythmic flow is graceful, varied, and well sustained.

The student, wishing to study the "Homeric question," can consult "Wolff's Prolegomena ad Homerum," and the "Problem of the Homeric Poems," by W. D. Geddes. A concise resumé is also given in Anthon's "Greek Literature," and "History of Greek Literature," by Talfourd, Bloomfield, and others. See also "Lachmann's Essays on Homer," in "Quart. Rev.," 81: 381.

A comprehensive account of the Homeric Poems is to be found in the Histories of Greek Literature by O. Müller, Bode, Bernhardt Schoell, and W. Mure.

The "Homeric Controversy" is treated of in "Quart. Rev.," 87: 235; 125: 441; "N. A. Rev.," 71: 387; 127: 511.

For a discussion of the plan of the Iliad, see "Grote's Greece," Vol. II.

LECTURE VII.

THE HOMERIC POEMS.

1. The invocation to the muse not a conventional formula in the Homeric poems ["Epic Philosophy," in "N. A. Rev.," 107: 501].

2. The poet regarded himself as a passive instrument under the influence of a divine musician ["Iliad," II, 484, 761; "Odyssey," VI, 267; VIII, 43; XXII, 347].

3. These poems not isolated mountains, but highest peaks in a vast range hidden in the past.

4. They bring into communion with a believing, mythic age entirely different from our own.

5. The different cycles or groups of poems on the Argonauts, the Theban legends, the siege and capture of Troy, and the return of the heroes.

6. The Iliad dwells on the siege of the city; the Odyssey belongs to the group of *Nostoi* or legends relating to the return to Greece.

7. Odysseus, or Ulysses, the central figure.

8. The Odyssey unfolds the social and domestic life of the heroic age.

9. The romantic charm of the poem.

10. A more perfect unity, a more even style of narration, and a more complex assemblage of events and characters ["Rev. des Deux Mondes," 1866; "Ed. Rev.," April, 1871].

11. The Ulysses of the Iliad and Odyssey.

12. Ulysses, whether present or absent, the unifying point of interest.

13. The entrance of the hero himself in Book V.

14. Ulysses on the sea shore and Tennyson's Enoch Arden.

15. The artistic construction of the poem, compared

with other narrative poems containing a multitude of characters and events.

16. Its permanent interest, in the faithful representation of human life and nature under mythic and romantic forms.

17. Its construction later than the parts of the *Iliad* containing the Achilles legend.

18. Few abstract terms; its geographical minuteness; its more humane tone; its modified social tone; its mythology of Zeus and his relation as omniscient father of the race ["*Od.*", I, 37; IV, 468; XIV, 444; "*Il.*", XVIII, 184].

19. The popular, romantic stories and sagas in the *Odyssey*, a different atmosphere and age from the primitive legends of the *Iliad* ["*Od.*", VIII, 556; IX, 94; X, 287].

20. Its ethical tone, which made it a favorite with philosophic thinkers ["*Cicero de Finibus*," V, 18; "*Memorabilia*," I, 3, 7; II, 6; "*Epistles of Horace*," I, 2, 26].

21. Ulysses the true representative Hellenic hero.

22. No poem of the Middle Ages more permeated with the romantic element.

23. Its symbolic form some justification to the view of it as a Greek "*Pilgrim's Progress*."

24. The characteristics of the epic as deduced from these Greek models [Blackie's "*Homer*," I, 262; "*Aristotle's Poetics*"].

25. The flippant view of Voltaire ["Essai sur la Poésie Epique"; "N. A. Rev.", Vol. CVII, p. 520].

26. The unity of a poem as something more than that produced by a unifying tradition and the same legendary and mythical background ["Ed. Rev.", 1849, p. 89].

27. These poems, (1) the most perfect specimens of the primitive epic; (2) the simple and natural description of an age and mode of thought entirely different from ours; (3) the embodiment of past ideals of life and character.

For a discussion of the authorship of the *Odyssey*, see "The Problem of the Homeric Poems," by W. D. Geddes, and "Fras. Mag." N. S., Vol. VIII, 375.

In "N. A. Rev.", Vol. CXII, pp. 328-370, April, 1871, is a good estimate of the different translations of Homer, and a good cursory view of the Homeric epic.

LECTURE VIII.

THE MEDIÆVAL EPICS.

1. No historical data for the rise of the *aoidoi* in Greece ["The Hellenes," by J. A. St. John, pp. 319, 320].

2. The rhapsodists sang the verses of others.

3. The verses of the Cyclic poets show the infinite distance between imitation and genius.

4. At the time of these poets, 776 B. C., the Homeric epics had attained a completed form.

5. The gradual development of the primitive epic, resuming in itself the ballad, the hymn, the ancient myth, the heroic legend, and the local tradition.

6. The combination of these into a whole, like the *Odyssey*, requires the action of one poetic mind.

7. This presence of one creative genius not irreconcilable with the spontaneous, national, and mythical character of the poems.

8. The construction of these poems is shown clearly by that of the epics of the Middle Ages in Europe ["*De l'Histoire de la Poesie*," par J. J. Ampère; "*Revue des Deux Mondes*," Août, 1832].

9. These mediæval poems more nearly related with the Homeric than are the *Æneid* or *Paradise Lost*.

10. The popular passion and imagination in history [Blackie's "*Homer*," Vol. I, p. 48; "*The Poetry of Seven Dials*," in "*Quart. Rev.*," 1867, Vol. CLXVII, p. 392].

11. The *chansons de geste* or poems of heroic deeds, of the XIth Century, which expand and illustrate the songs of the illustrious chiefs who were themselves minstrels like Achilles.

12. The jongleurs and the rhapsodists exercised similar functions.

13. The expansion of these chansons into romances, and the modification by introducing contemporary and historic names and events.

14. The same relative religious development in the

Homeric and mediæval poems: the same credulity, symbolism, and personification.

15. The points of analogy in the social condition of feudalism and the Homeric age.

16. The Scandinavian Eddas and the Germanic Nibelungenlied ["The Gripis-Spa; from the Elder Edda," "Fraser's Mag.", N. S., 1874, Vol. XI, p. 227; "The Teutonic and Celtic Epic," p. 336].

17. The parallel for the Homeric epos in the Lay of the Nibelungs, and the chansons of Saulcourt and Maldon, not in Virgil [Freeman's "Comparative Politics," p. 300].

18. The mythic background and coloring of the Norse and Germanic poems ["History of Literature," by F. Schlegel p. 154, Bohn's edition].

19. The Lay of the Nibelungs not before the XIIth, nor later than the XIIIth Century, though the events go far back into the Gothic era ["Dublin Univ. Mag., 80; 232].

20. In the XIIIth Century these adventures and legends were recited or sung at the assembly of chiefs and warlike princes ["Les Origines de l'épopée du moyen âge," Romans carlovingiens, "Rev. des Deux Mondes," 1st Sept., 1832; "Romans de la Table-Ronde," 15th Sept., 1832].

21. The authorship attributed to Wolfram von Eschenbach, Henry von Ofterdingen, Conrad of Wurzburg, and Klingsoehr.

22. The poem contains the Sigfried Saga and a Burgundian legend of Attila's conquest.

23. The Icelandic Saga collected by Sæmund, who died in 1133 ["Rev. des Deux Mondes," Nov.-Dec., 1866].

24. The Nibelungenlied understood only by comparison with the Icelandic Saga, where the stories are in their period of formation.

25. The same primitive traditions, based upon mythical data, to be found in Saxony, on the Rhine, the Baltic, in Iceland, and the Faroe islands. The reproduction of myths found in Greece, of Apollo, Adonis, Pegasus and Bellerophon, the Hesperides, the Golden Fleece, the invisible cap, invulnerability, the feminine jealousy, etc.

26. These localized, and adapted to historical names and events which are gradually substituted for the original.

27. The minstrels of the XIIIth Century had a large body of songs, lays, and poems from which to select and combine.

28. The lament of Gudrun by Sigurd's corpse ["Fauriel's Provençal Poetry," translated by Adler, p. 186].

29. The Lay of Roland, a French epic, the oldest of the *chansons de geste* ["Les Épopées françaises," par M. Léon Gautier, 3d vol., 1868; "Revue des Deux Mondes," Juin, 1852].

30. The four great cycles of legends comprehended in mediæval epics: (1) Gothic, Frankish, and Burgun-

dian, including the Nibelungs, the Heldenbuch, and the Elder Edda; (2) Charlemagne; (3) King Arthur and his Round Table; (4) The Cid, Champion, or Conqueror, the popular victor over the Moors [Ticknor's "Spanish Literature," Vol. I, p. 13].

31. The romantic and classic poems equally based in popular beliefs, life, and traditions.

For some of this mediæval literature, see "The Nibelung Story" in "Romances of the Middle Ages," by G. W. Cox and E. H. Jones, pp. 276-315, Henry Holt & Co., 1880.

"Nibelungnoth und Klage," a version into modern German, by A. Zeune.

"Le Morte D'Arthur," by F. J. Furnivall; "Morte D'Arthur," by Sir T. Malory.

"Popular Epics of the Middle Ages," 2 vols., by J. M. Ludlow.

"Tableau de la Literature au moyen âge," par M. Villemain.

LECTURE IX.

THE HINDOO EPICS.

1. Two epics in India as in Greece. The Mahabharata, like the Iliad, has the more primitive elements; the Ramayana, like the Odyssey, has a more consistent unity and completeness.

2. Made up of warlike exploits, romantic and mythic legends, but all on a vast scale of exaggeration in accordance with the oriental imagination.

3. The Ramayana, like the Odyssey, opens with a

council of the gods consulting how they shall destroy Ravana who cannot be conquered by gods, giants, or demons. Man is not included, and Vishnu agrees to become a man.

4. The fundamental theme, like that of all primitive epics, is the contest with evil, fidelity to a sacred promise, and the persistence in noble virtues.

5. The immediate occasion is the abduction of a wife.

6. The Hindoo Sita the type of feminine modesty and wifely devotion.

7. The religious development the same with that of the Homeric and the mediæval poems.

8. The gigantic proportions of the Hindoo legends. The legend of the Ganges.

9. The moral tone of many reflections.

10. The Mahabharata a vast conglomerate of 220,000 lines; a banyan tree with branches each forming a separate root, and itself a forest with underbrush and entangled copse.

11. The thread of a continuous story traceable through its many episodes and various legends.

12. Great national eras and changes narrated under this mythical guise.

13. The remarkable episodes of the Bhagavad Gita, and Damayanti and Nala.

14. These episodes are really metrical novels, notwithstanding Prof. Swing's declaration that no novel is to be found in Hindoo literature.

15. The recovery of their kingdom by the Pandavas

is not the end. Like Ulysses they set out again, and after many allurements and temptations overcome, they enter the real heaven.

See "L'Epopée indienne," par E. Quinet, in "Rev. des Deux Mondes," 1st Juil., 1840.

"Le Bhagavata Purana," Ibid, Nov. 15, 1840.

"Le Ramayana," Ibid, Sept. 15, 1847.

"The Mahabharata," "N. A. Rev.", Vol. CIII; 18-68.

"Le Bhagavata-Purana," in "La Science et Les Lettres en Orient," par J. J. Ampère, pp. 384-412.

"Nal und Damajanti," von Fried. Rückert.

"Indische Sagen," von Adolf Holtzmann.

"Der Raub der Draupadi," von M. Fertig.

"Yadjndatta-Badha, episode extrait et traduit du Ramayana," par A. L. Chézy.

"Fragment du Mahaprasthanikaparva," par Ph. E. Foucaux.

"Bhagavad-Gita, das hohe Lied der Indus," von C. R. S. Peiper.

"Le Ramayana," in "La Science et Les Lettres," par J. J. Ampère, pp. 446-489.

LECTURE X.

THE PERSIAN EPIC.

1. The Persian epic, like the country and the language, occupies an intermediate position between the Greek and the Hindoo.

2. It is also intermediate between the primitive and the literary epic.

3. Firdusi, the author of the "Schah Nameh," or

"Book of Kings," the great Persian epic, lived in the Xth Century.

4. Written not in Arabic, but in the old vernacular.

5. The earnest devotion, patriotism, and faith of the national poet, weaving into one poem the traditional history of Persia from the earliest times.

6. Dynasties and centuries embodied under great representative names.

7. His independent and indignant bearing in his poverty makes him the peer of Dante, Tasso and Camoëns.

8. Looked upon as having "a divine mission."

9. The poem begins with the dawn of civilization, and celebrates its successive steps under the names of heroes, of whom the greatest is Djemsched.

10. The overweening arrogance and humiliation of Djemschid and the successful rebellion of Kahweh, the blacksmith.

11. His apron becomes the sacred oriflamme of the Persian monarchy.

12. Zoroaster and the abolition of idolatry; Isfendiar and the restoration of the old cultus.

13. Alexander, under the name of Sikander, celebrated as one of the Persian kings.

14. The main subject-matter of the legendary treatment, like the Greek and the Hindoo epic, is war with alien and savage races.

15. The unity is that of a poetic ideal of the national spirit and history.

16. As in all epics, divine powers mingle in human affairs, accomplishing the purpose of the supreme will.

17. The invocation to the "Lord of Life and Light."

18. The voice of the pure, grand, and simple old religion.

19. Freer from extravagant and high-flown imagery than other oriental poems. Its grace, pathos, and humanly tone.

20. Its view of life as changing and uncertain; the generations like "passing caravans, one to-day, the next to-morrow"; "The world an ingenious juggler, every moment playing some novel trick."

21. The descriptions of battle animated, but vague and general; not minute and specific, like those of Homer.

22. The insight into spiritual laws and great moral truths under symbolic statements.

23. The love depicted, that of glowing Eastern passion.

24. Many of its wonderful legends, tales of magic, astrology, necromancy, giants, dragons, chivalrous adventure, genii, and spirits, re-appear in mediæval romances.

25. The episode of Zohrab and Rustem [Matthew Arnold's Poems; "*L'Histoire littéraire de la France, avant le XII siècle*," par J. J. Ampère, quoted in "*Démogéot*," p. 22; Comparison with the Lay of Hildebrand].

26. The powers of light and darkness in the Persian and the Norse mythology. Other points of resemblance, in characters and events, to the Iliad.

27. The poem embraces the three periods into which

history may be divided : (1) the mythical ; (2) the heroic ; (3) the historical.

28. The effect of the old Homeric ballads, in the heroic ages, to be understood "only by him who witnesses the effect of similar compositions upon the wild nomads of the East," according to Layard.

See "La Science et les Lettres en Orient," par J. J. Ampère, pp. 279-375.

"Das Heldenbuch von Iran, aus dem Schah Nameh des Firdusi," von J. Görres.

Sainte Beuve's "Causeries de Lundi," Tome I.

Atkinson's English translation, published in London, 1832.

"Le Schah-Nameh," épopée Persane, traduite par M. Mohl.

LECTURES XI AND XII.

THE ÆNEID.

1. The Æneid the chief literary or secondary epic.
2. Virgil, born at Mantua, 70 B. C., and died 19 B. C. at Brundisium.
3. The first six books based on the Odyssey, and the last six on the Iliad, with essentially the same mythology and scenes, and some of the same actors.
4. Shows an advance in civilization and humane characteristics.
5. The poem based upon the national traditions, and related to the past and the future of Rome, Augustus

himself supposed the direct descendant of Iulus, the son of Æneas. The relation with Carthage.

6. The reflected light of Homeric incidents, characters, scenes, and illustrations.

7. Not to be depreciated or dismissed as merely an imitation: a graft having the flavor and taste of the Roman soil, with purely Roman characteristics.

8. The Roman practical, ceremonial, destitute of æsthetic imagination, imported epic and dramatic poetry, while satire, didactic verse, annals and oratory were indigenous.

9. The perception of literary form received from Greek writers. The new world opened to intellect and taste.

10. The fate, fortune, glory of the Roman state a pervading national sentiment, and a fixed political tradition culminating in the deification of the emperor and universal dominion.

11. The touch-stone of excellence what was useful, and art and learning but a diversion, a toy for leisure hours. His gymnastic training to fit the Roman citizen to bear arms, and not to cultivate manly excellence in every direction like the Greek.

12. The original literature of Rome reflects these traits of the national character. The modification through Greek and courtly influence.

13. The age of Augustus, with its luxury, varnish of culture, weariness of war, love of the circus, of magnificence, archæological learning, and dilettante tastes.

14. Merivale sees in the *Æneid* a protest against the idea, supposed to be entertained by the emperor, of removing the seat of empire to the East.

15. Virgil a lover of retirement, country life, books, and simple pleasures, more than of the city and court.

16. He saw in Augustus a benefactor and friend, a friend of peace and the arts of peace, and a guardian of the national glory and prosperity.

17. Virgil's poem has lived, not merely because of its individual poetic beauties, but because it embodied the traditions of Rome, and was rooted in the national life. He connects the latest triumph with the cradle of Roman kings.

18. The poet sings from himself, and works up in an artistic manner the old forms, consciously arranging the lights, shades, and coloring. The muse he invokes is memory: "Bring to my mind, O Muse, the cause," etc.

19. The opening of the poem, and the first connection with Carthage, the conquered rival of Rome.

20. The descent into the mystic shades in the sixth book, the point from which begin the adventures and battles on Italian soil.

21. *Æneas* represented not as a warlike hero delighting in battle, but compassionate, merciful, obedient to the will of the gods, and an instrument in accomplishing a divine destiny.

22. Unfortunately, our human interest is on the side of Dido and Turnus, not on that of *Æneas* and Lavinia.

23. The eighth book records as prophecy, on the

shield of Æneas, an idealized picture of an actual imperial triumph.

24. The fourth book not Homeric, but Euripidean in its passion and sentiment.

25. The poet sacrifices the personal qualities of heroic energy and constancy of Æneas to the necessity of making him a representative character, and an executor of the divine decrees.

26. The heroic Sir Philip Sydney's view of Æneas as an example "to be worn in the tablet of the memory."

27. The heroine Camilla in the eleventh book.

28. Mr. Gladstone's uncritical and unfair estimate of Virgil as a poet compared with Homer. The "vein of untruthfulness in the Æneid," for the most part, a necessary result of its being a literary production in a far different age, and not a reproduction in a believing age of its manners and modes of feeling and thought ["Homer and the Homeric Age," Vol. III, p. 507].

29. The true position of Virgil as an epic poet [Sainte Beuve's "Etude sur Virgile," p. 62].

30. Virgil not a servile flatterer, and Æneas not meant to be a literal copy of Augustus Cæsar, as Dunlop maintains ["History of Latin Literature," Vol. III, p. 173].

31. The mythologic machinery and state-gods of the Æneid very different from the gods of Homer.

32. Virgil initiated in the learning, the archæology, and philosophy of the most cultivated era of ancient Rome.

33. The poetic significance of this descent into the

realm of ancestral spirits ["Swedenborg, a Biography," by J. J. G. Wilkinson, p. 267, Boston, 1849].

34. The Hades of Virgil and that of Homer different as rude, natural superstition is from Platonic or Pythagorean speculation.

35. The oriental coloring of Virgil's representation of the "divine immanence."

36. This visit to the world of shades, and the prophetic utterance of Anchises in regard to the destiny and "imperial arts" worthy of Rome, bind together the past and the future in one national bond.

37. The poet has erected a monument not only to his own individual poetic genius, but to Rome, in preserving her traditions, reflecting her glory, and embalming her language.

For brief, general notices of Virgil, see the "Histories of Latin Literature," by Bernhardt, Browne, Pierron and Schœll.

"Les Poètes du siècle d'Auguste," 15 Dec., 1837.

"Etudes sur la Poesie Latine," par M. Patin.

"Revue des Deux Mondes," 15 Mai, 1869.

"La Religion romaine et la vie future dans Virgile," "Revue des Deux Mondes," 1 Mars et 1 Juin, 1873.

"English Translators of Virgil," by J. Conington, Vol. I, p. 137.

"Quarterly Review," July, 1861.

Translation of the *Æneid* by Dryden, into rhymed pentameter; by Conington, into prose; by Morris, into rhymed English verse.

"Virgil and his Translators," "Quart. Rev.," 110: 73; "Fras. Mag.," N. S., 3: 162; *Ibid*, 75: 83; "Blackwood," 101: 35; "N. Brit. Rev.," 45: 394.

LECTURE XIII.

THE CONVENTIONAL EPIC.

1. The epic, in the hands of inferior poets, like Lucan with Pompey as hero, and Silius Italicus with Hannibal, fail to interest. Eloquent verse is not true poetry ["Translation of Lucan," by Nicholas Rowe, in 1718; "Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography"; "Etudes de Mœurs et de Critique," par D. Nisard].

2. The conventional epic hit off by Byron ["Don Juan," Canto I, st. cc].

3. The "Art of Epic Composition" ["Blackwood," 42: 737].

4. The literary, or conventional epic compared with the primitive, or national, wherein is contained the ideals of life, the philosophy and history of past generations.

5. Each great poet, in each cultivated nation, strives to produce this grandest of poetic forms.

6. The "Jerusalem Delivered" by Tasso,¹ 1500 years after Virgil, on Italian soil ["History of the madness and imprisonment of T. Tasso," by R. H. Wilde; "Life of T. Tasso," by R. Milman; "History of Italian Lit.," by Ginguéné].

7. The subject of the poem contrasted with the *Æneid*.

8. The imitative and lyric character of the poem.

9. Its want of unity, its mixed mythologic forms, and unreal spiritual machinery, cannot be compensated by melody of verse, lyric tenderness, and enthusiastic piety.

10. The supernatural revelation to Godfrey defended on the ground that "the expedition of the Crusaders was infinitely pleasing to God, and it was natural that He should reward the signal zeal and piety of the hero."

11. The "*Lusiad*" of Camoëns, in middle of XVIth Century ["*Revue des Deux Mondes*," Avril 15, 1832; "*Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Camoëns*," by Adamson, London, 1820].

12. The best record of the glory of Portugal engaged in discovery and conquest of the New World.

13. The incongruous mingling of Heathen mythology and mediæval superstition.

14. The apparition of the giant Adamastor.

15. In this poem the flowering out of the poetic genius of Lusitania or Portugal ["*Life of Camoëns*," "*Quart. Rev.*," 27: 1; "*Poetry of*," "*Ed. Rev.*," 97: 405].

16. The "*Henriade*," by Voltaire, published in London in 1728 ["*Parallèle de la Henriade et du Lutrin*," par l'Abbé Batteaux].

17. Voltaire and epic poetry sufficiently incongruous. His "*Essay on epic poetry*" published in English in 1726, at London.

18. The national vanity flattered by possessing a so called epic poem. Pronounced by contemporaries, "beautiful as Virgil," "a marvelous work," "un chef-d'œuvre d'esprit"; 300,000 copies sold at once ["*Hist. of French Literature*," by Domogeot; by D. Nisard; by Vinet; "*Le Roi Voltaire*," by Strauss].

19. A telescopic lens required now to bring this star of the first magnitude into view.

20. The subject, Henry IV and the war of the league, not epic.

21. The real Voltaire in the description of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the Festival of Toleration.

22. His measureless conceit, vanity, and wit in a letter to Madame —.

23. Tennyson as an epic poet in his "Idyls of the King" ["Ed. Rev.", 90: 388; 110: 247; "Blackwood," 86: 608; "Quart. Rev.", 106: 454].

24. King Arthur as the subject of an epic in one of his earliest poems, "Morte d'Arthur."

25. Misty and Ossian-like gleamings of the past, dilettante limning, not breathing and actual forms.

26. The old legends told in marvelously rhythmic verses, with glimpses of an attempt at unity of purpose and coloring, but no epic completeness or interest for the present age ["The Idylls of the King as an Epic"; "Quart. Rev.", Vol. CXXVI, p. 336; "Fras. Mag.", 60: 301; "Dub. Univ. Mag.", 55: 62].

27. The numerous imitations of the conventional epic in English verse will not repay study or criticism.

¹ Translation by Hunt, reviewed in "Quart. Rev.", 25: 246; by Fairfax, in "N. A. Rev.", 14: 87.

LECTURE XIV.

THE RELIGIOUS EPIC.

1. Religious, dogmatic subjects unfit for epic treatment.

2. All the primitive epics essentially religious—saturated with the deepest belief: earth and sky, the finite and infinite blended.

3. The eternal laws of justice and love celebrated in Dante, the swan-song of mediæval faith. The mazes of scholastic divinity unfit for song.

4. The "Messiah" of Klopstock, a paraphrase of the New Testament history, pious, tender, and lyrical ["Foreign Quarterly," 30: 439].

5. Milton's "Paradise Lost," first published in its present form in 1674 [Macaulay's "Essays," Vol. I, and "Ed. Rev.," 42: 304; Masson's "Life and Times of Milton"; "Chris. Exam.," 3: 29, and Channing's Works, Vol. I; "Review," by R. W. Emerson, in "N. Amer. Rev.," 47: 56].

6. The poem partaking of elevation, an expression of his own self-conscious nobility of purpose and grandeur of thought.

7. Conversant with a few great ideas and of simple, natural tastes, a lover of art, and the primal affections of human nature. The granite beneath with a covering of earth in which grow flowers [Walter Bagehot's "Literary Studies," Vol. I, p. 173].

8. He deals with stately and majestic sights and sounds that presents themselves to all.

9. His poetry heavy with the weight of learned allusions, epithets, and illustrations.

10. His preparation for writing his epic, "letting his wings grow and preparing to fly."

11. The "overshadowing of the heavenly wings," the illumination "with an interior light," and "the hallowed fire of the altar to touch and purify the lips."

12. He hoped to celebrate the "divine mercies and judgments" in his own land, but not allowed even the "honor to be admitted among the mourners."

13. He gathers about him the visions of beauty, justice, and truth, to "vindicate the ways of God to man."

14. The life, character, and opinions of Milton needed to be known, in order to estimate aright the "Paradise Lost." The true epic does not require such a commentary.

15. The representation of the play of "Adam or Original Sin" at Milan, suggested to Milton a tragedy, of which he wrote the opening scene, but which culminated in his epic.

16. The dogmatic and metaphysical projections of his own reasoning and study mar the poetic force and insight.

17. The bald literalizing and materializing of the spiritual in Milton's theological statements.

18. His representation of the Creator, that of a school-

divine ["History of English Literature," by Taine, Vol. II, ch. VI].

19. The delineations of Satan and Eve alone excite interest ["Dub. Univ. Mag.", 88: 707; "North. Amer. Rev.", 91: 539].

20. The mechanical and slavish loyalty required in the command to transfer reverence, love, and worship to an unknown power. The Almighty represented as an Absolute Despotic Monarch.

21. The suggestive character of his descriptions, and the manner in which they are brought before the mind rather than the eye.

22. Our traditional prepossessions hinder us from judging critically this poem. Criticism of Taine one-sided and exaggerated.

23. Estimate by Hegel¹; Scherer²; Coleridge³; F. Schlegel⁴; Arnold.⁵

24. The tendency of our age to neglect this poem as a whole, and all poetry not in harmony with the spirit of modern thought, and the essential laws of human development.

¹ "In Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' we cannot fail to see how great a discrepancy exists between the subject-matter of the poem, and the reflective views of the poet in his description of events, persons, and conditions. Milton gives us the sentiments and states of a modern fancy, and the moral notions of his age."

Again, he says: "The new manifestations in the spheres of belief and of actual life have their origin in the principles of the reformation; but the whole tendency of modern life is more peculiarly adapted to lyric than to epic poetry. Yet there is an after-bloom

of the epic to be found even here, of which Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Klopstock's *Messiah* are leading specimens. In classic culture and in grace of expression, Milton takes a preëminent rank in his time; but in depth and energy of thought, in original invention and constructive power he is far inferior to Dante. On the one hand, the conflict and the catastrophe take too much of a dramatic form; and on the other, the lyric elevation and the moral didactic tendency are fundamental features as remote as possible from the nature of the subject itself."—Hegel's "*Æsthetik*," Vol. III, ch. III.

² "*Paradise Lost* is a false, grotesque, tiresome poem; not one reader in a hundred can go through the ninth and tenth books without smiling, or through the eleventh and twelfth without yawning. It does not hold together; it is a pyramid balancing on its point; the most frightful of problems resolved by the most puerile of means. And yet, nevertheless, '*Paradise Lost*' is immortal. It lives in virtue of some episodes which will remain forever famous. Dante we must read as a whole if we wish to possess his beauties; but Milton we must read only in fragments. Yet these fragments are part of the poetic patrimony of the human race."—"Etudes Critiques," par E. Scherer.

³ Coleridge's "*Works*" in Harper's edition, Vol. IV, p. 300.

⁴ "*History of Literature*," p. 278.

⁵ Arnold's "*English Literature*," p. 243.

LECTURE XV.

THE MOCK EPIC.

1. The elevated and sublime may be represented in a ludicrous light. The epithets and deeds befitting one character ascribed to the opposite produce the effect of incongruity.

2. The ideal of one age becomes ridiculous in a differ-

ent one. Every object is seen through a particular medium.

3. The "Orlando Furioso" of Ariosto, in the XVIth Century, shows by its hyperbolic extravagance that the reign of chivalry is over [Guingenet's "History of Italian Literature"; "Rose's Translation" in "Blackwood," 13: 299; "Quart. Rev.," 30: 40; "Dub. Univ. Mag.," 26: 187, 581; 27: 90].

4. Exquisite irony in "Don Quijote," by Cervantes, but no exaggerated extravagance. The ideal of one age is brought into contact with what is commonplace and real ["Life and Writings of Cervantes," by T. Roscoe; Sismondi's "Literature of the South of Europe"; Ticknor's "Spanish Literature"; "Revue des Deux Mondes," 15th Dec., 1877].

5. The comic epic divided into the burlesque and the mock-heroic. The burlesque brings into ludicrous situations, and created incongruity by low associations. The language and images applied to characters the extreme opposite of those originally introduced [The "Virgile Travesti," by Paul Scarron in 1648; "The French Humorists," by Walter Besant, p. 253].

6. This followed by numberless imitations. A trick, like punning, and becomes wearisome.

7. The enthusiasm of one age furnishes material for burlesque of the succeeding.

8. The "Turnament of Tottenham" in the XVth Century ["North Brit. Rev." p. 59].

9. This sounds like a burlesque, but may have been

written simply as a description of what actually occurred [Compare "King Henry VI," Part II, Act II, § 3, in the same Century].

10. The burlesque entitled "Alma," or the "Seat of the Mind," by M. Prior, in the XVIIth Century ["The Poetical Works of Matthew Prior," "North Brit. Rev.," Vol. XLIII, p. 66].

11. The best English burlesque is Butler's *Hudibras*; but with a special tendency to satirize the Puritans ["N. Brit. Rev.," 24: 50; "Fras. Mag.," 53: 342].

12. Uncritically compared with Don Quixote. The laugh raised by each is different. The only similarity that both sally forth with their squires; but they are on very different errands. Don Quixote has the charm of universal ideas, natural truth, simple goodness, and symbolic suggestiveness ["Fras. Mag.," 7: 324, 565].

13. The example of the mock-epic in Boileau's poem, "Le Lutrin," written in France in 1683, to prove the theory advanced in his "Ars Poetica" that a heroic poem ought to be burdened with but a small amount of subject-matter, and the interest sustained by the invention of the poet ["Causeries du Lundi," par St. Beuve, VI].

14. The "Lutrin," or "Lecterne," excites but little interest, and is a fatal argument against the thesis that an epic poem needs few incidents and abundance of witty filling up from the poet's brain.

15. A perfect example of the mock-heroic in Pope's "Rape of the Lock," in 1714 [Taine's "English Literature," Book III, ch. VII; "De Quincey, Vol. XV].

16. Its exquisite wit, delicacy of touch, fine satire, and sustained flight.

17. Entirely different from a mere caricature, burlesque, or travesty.

18. The mock-epic poem goes far back in literature. The *Batrachomyomachia*, *βάτραχος* (frog), *μῦς* (mouse), *μάχη* (battle), of uncertain date, but not later than the IIIrd Century, B. C., is no longer ascribed to Homer. A pure parody in 294 verses of the heroic poems and the intervention of the gods, employing the rhapsodic language and images to detail a battle between frogs and mice ["Blackwood," 43: 202, 631].

19. The humor consists in the contrast between the external form and the real contents of the poem.

20. A fanciful playing with the imaginative forms of the epic, with no more special tendency or intentional satire, than children have when they dress themselves up in the garments of their elders.

21. It must be very remote from the heroic age itself.

22. No parody or burlesque can be ranked as a work of constructive art. Only the earnest, the noble, the sincere expression of feeling and thought awakens a responsive life.

23. The difference between these wilful, ludicrous inventions, and the poetical myths which they burlesque, is readily felt. We laugh, perhaps, at their grotesqueness, but no breath of poesy comes from their exaggerated and assumed forms. The old poems, as literally false as the caricatures themselves, are the product of a spiritual power working in the consciousness of the fleeting generations, and embody great spiritual truths, which make them a cherished possession of the mind and heart to-day. This poesy it was that endeared them to the millions whose moral and spiritual food they once were. This ideal element still remains.

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